

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

COPIES:

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November 19, 1977

Dear Cliff:

I want to thank you for your letter of October 19 concerning my visit to Argentina and the human rights situation there. I am sending an identical response to your colleagues who also signed the letter.

One of the principal reasons for my visit to Argentina will be to discuss the human rights question. We are deeply concerned with the situation there, and I will express this to President Videla and their other leaders.

As you know, a number of actions have been taken by the United States to convey to the Argentines how strongly we are committed to human rights. All arms transfer requests are being reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and we are not approving transfers of articles or services intended for police and civil law enforcement, or which could be described as such. Military training for Argentina has been withdrawn, and there will be no military sales credits for FY 1978. We have voted against an Argentine gas pipeline loan request in the Inter-American Development Bank and have informed the Argentines that other negative votes can be expected unless there is progress in the human rights area. The Argentines are fully aware that substantial improvement in our relations is dependent on their observance of basic human rights.

In raising our human rights concerns with the Argentines, we have not hesitated to call their attention to particular cases. Accordingly, we have made many direct requests to the Argentine government for information on individuals who have disappeared and been detained there. Mr. Timmerman is one such individual. President Carter spoke of our concern about Mr. Timmerman to President Videla during their bilateral

The Honorable
 Clifford Case,
 Committee on Foreign Relations,
 United States Senate.

-2-

conversation at the Panama Canal Treaties signing Ceremony. I intend to bring up Mr. Timerman's status with the Argentines during my visit and will let you know the results of my discussion.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature, possibly 'C', written in dark ink.

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

October 19, 1977

7727643

The Honorable Cyrus R. Vance
Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

In view of your visit to Argentina next month, we want to express our concerns about the human rights situation there.

As you know, there has been little significant progress in reducing human rights violations and restoring Constitutional guarantees despite the marked decrease in terrorist and subversive activities. Indeed, the Argentine Government has largely eliminated the terrorist threat, at least in comparison to what it was a year ago. Nevertheless, the disappearances and arrests continue at a steady and alarming rate.

In this regard, we wish to draw attention to the particular case of Jacob Timmerman who, until the time of his arrest, was Editor-in-Chief of the Buenos Aires daily La Opinion. Mr. Timmerman was arrested earlier this year, but, as you know, has not been brought to trial. The circumstances and reasons for Mr. Timmerman's arrest have never been explained in a satisfactory way. We are inclined to believe that Mr. Timmerman has been detained primarily because of his role as an outspoken editor, particularly on human rights matters.

We hope that when you and members of your party meet with President Videla that you will convey to him and members of the Argentine Government our deep concern about the Timmerman case and the highly unsatisfactory human rights situation as we perceive it. Moreover, we ask that you express our doubts about any meaningful improvement in our bilateral relations with Argentina in the absence of significant progress in the human rights area.

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

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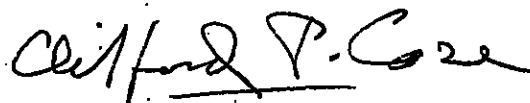
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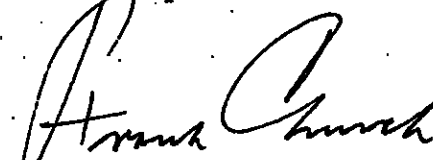
We appreciate very much your conveying these sentiments on our behalf to the authorities in Argentina. We are sending a copy of this letter to Ambassador Aja Espil.

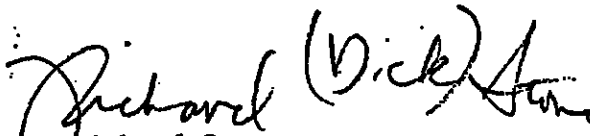
Sincerely,


Jacob K. Javits
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Western
Hemisphere Affairs


Clifford P. Case


Paul S. Sarbanes
Chairman
Subcommittee on Western
Hemisphere Affairs


Frank Church


Richard Stone

cc: Amb. Aja Espil



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ACTION MEMORANDUM

S/S

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THRU X

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14 NOV 1977

UNCLASSIFIED

TO: The Secretary
FROM: ARA - Terence A. Todman
SUBJECT: Letter on Human Rights in Argentina

ISSUE FOR DECISION

Whether to sign the attached letters to five Senators concerning the human rights situation in Argentina.

ESSENTIAL FACTORS

Five Senators on the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs have sent you a letter on October 19 concerning the human rights situation in Argentina. They specifically asked that you convey their concern to the Argentine government about the imprisonment of Jacobo Timerman, a well known Argentine newspaper editor and Jewish community leader.

Recommendation:

That you sign the attached letters to Senators Javits, Sarbanes, Case, Church and Stone.

Attachments:

1. Response to Letter from Members of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs.
2. Letter from Members of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs.

Drafted: ARA/ECA: JNBumpus: jc
11/9/77: x29166: #7727643
Clearance: D/HA: MBoval

H: ASwift

D: Soxman (Subs)

Department of State, ARA/IPS/SAP

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Box 1

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(other letters attached but not copied)